

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 113

By Stewart

A RESOLUTION designating February 28, 2009, as “Dragging Canoe Day” in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the area that now encompasses the great State of Tennessee was once the homeland and tribal hunting grounds of a number of First Nations People who had great attachment to the land and who staunchly defended their right to live, hunt, and draw nourishment from that land; and

WHEREAS, treaties between the people of the First Nations and the United States failed to satisfy the desires and ambitions of the overall population of these First Nations; and

WHEREAS, Dragging Canoe, Tsi'yu gunsini, the son of Attakullakulla, who was part Shawnee and part Cherokee, and of a mother who was a Natchez living in a town of refugees from tribes that had settled on the Little Tennessee River, distinguished himself among his brethren; and

WHEREAS, about the time of the American Revolution, Dragging Canoe, along with 1,000 warriors and their families, separated from the Cherokee Nation and, in association with the Muscogee (Creek), Choctaw, Natchez, Shawnee, Delaware, Mohawk, and White Tories, formed a new band under the anglicized name of the Chickamauga; and

WHEREAS, the Chickamauga established the five towns of Running Water, Nickajack, Long Island, Crow Town, and Lookout Mountain in the lower Tennessee and Sequatchie River valleys in Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Dragging Canoe's exceptional legacy and leadership skills left a lasting impression on the American Indians of the Southeast by demonstrating that different tribes could work together toward a common goal; and

WHEREAS, Tecumseh and the Prophet, both students of Dragging Canoe, continued to follow his example well into the nineteenth century; and

WHEREAS, Dragging Canoe's legacy places him among other notable American Indians such as Red Jacket, Cornplanter of the Seneca, Alexander McGillvray of the Muscogee (Creek), Cornstalk of the Shawnee, George White Eyes of the Delaware, and Little Turtle of the Miami, all of whom were dominant figures of the Revolutionary era; and

WHEREAS, Dragging Canoe performed heroic deeds to protect the homelands of the American Indians and the land of his birth, declaring, "Should we not therefore run all risks, and incur all consequences, rather than submit to further loss of our country?"; and

WHEREAS, on or around February 29, 1792, Dragging Canoe died from an apparent heart attack after dancing all night in celebration of the recently formed alliance with the Muskogee and the Choctaw; and

WHEREAS, Dragging Canoe's bold stand during the Revolutionary period and his dedicated attempts to unite different nations of American Indians continue to inspire Native Americans throughout this State and Nation to this day; now, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this Body hereby designates February 28, 2009, as "Dragging Canoe Day" in the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is the express intent of this General Assembly that each February 28th thereafter be recognized as "Dragging Canoe Day" in Tennessee as well.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.